

## THE CHORAL ODES IN AESCHYLUS

GALVANI (G.) (ed.) *Eschilo: Agamennone. I canti*. (I Canti del Teatro Greco 9.) Pp. 271. Pisa and Rome: Fabrizio Serra Editore, 2021. Paper, €84. ISBN: 978-88-3315-289-9.

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This book is a new volume in the series *I Canti del Teatro Greco*, founded by B. Gentili and directed by P. Giannini, A. Gostoli, L. Lomiento and F. Perusino.<sup>1</sup> The publication follows and consolidates the research of the prestigious school of Urbino, which, among other contributions, has emphasised colometry data on the frontier between textual criticism and understanding of the metric-rhythmic texture of the analysed works, together with research by T.J. Fleming and E.C. Kopff ('Colometry of Greek Lyric Verses in Tragic Texts', *SIFC Supp.* 310 [1992], 758–70). Therefore, this book and the rest of this series focus on the lyrical sections of classic dramatic works: such sections are presented as laboratories for inter-artistic experimentation, in part recorded textually.

The publication of a volume dedicated to the lyrical sections of Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* is a challenge for methodologies and analyses that use colometry. In addition to the difficulties imposed by the textual transmission, there is an immense critical reception of the work, which spreads out in large and exhaustive commentaries published in recent years, such as those by E. Medda (*Eschilo: Agamennone*, 3 vols [2017]) and P. Judet de La Combe (*L'Agamemnon d'Eschyle: commentaire des dialogues*, 2 vols [2001]).

G. engages with this extensive textual transmission and critical reception, producing an up-to-date and well-written reference work for researchers. Such engagement is manifested in the structure of the publication: at the outset, the introduction puts forward the fundamental concepts and organisation that guide the book. Then each of *Agamemnon*'s lyrical sections is presented in the order of its metrical structure. For each one an edited text is offered with critical apparatus, in which the main variants based on the manuscript tradition are indicated. Afterwards, there is the metrical scansion of each verse of the section, with the recorded transcription and nomenclature. At the end, a detailed commentary explains and justifies the interpretative decisions in establishing the text and the metric-rhythmic texture.

Thus, although such analytical products were prepared altogether, guaranteeing the coherence of the book, they are articulated at different levels and can be consulted separately, functioning as points of reference for the specific needs of researchers. The comments, for example, resume and expand themes from the synthetic introduction. In the introduction, it is argued that, when taking into account the practice of dividing the text of the lyrical sections into parts or rhythmic subphrases (*cola*), a closer relationship is established with the performative breadth of proposing multisensory events to an audience. Thus, such a textual arrangement would approximate *mise en page* to *mise en scène*.

With that, from the production of ancient Athenian dramaturgy, there would be a complex continuity in the record of performative information inscribed in the metric and textual organisation of tragedies and comedies until the Alexandrian grammarians and

<sup>1</sup>Published editions: 1: Euripides' *Rhesus*, ed. by G. Pace (2001); 2: Euripides' *Heracleidae*, ed. by M. Grazia Fileni (2006); 3: Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, ed. by F.G. Giannachi (2009); 4: Sophocles' *Antigone*, ed. by F.G. Giannachi (2011); 5: Aeschylus' *The Libation Bearers*, ed. by G. Galvani (2015); 6: Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*, ed. by F. Perusino (2016); 7: Euripides' *Ion*, ed. by P. Santé (2017); 8: Aristophanes' *The Knights*, ed. by L. Bravi (2020).

from there to medieval manuscripts (this continuity is questioned, among others, by L. Prauscello, *Singing Alexandria. Music Between Practice and Textual Transmission* [2006]; L. Battezzato, ‘Colometria antica e pratica editoriale moderna’, *QUCC* n.s. 90 [2008], 137–58). Such information would not be a reproduction of the original performance, but rather present ways of indicating aural and movement patterns and orientations, present in sound acts and dances.

For example: in the commentary on the first part of the *parodos*, what is announced in the introduction is expanded in the analysis. Reviewing the tradition of modern metre that, since A. Boeckh and especially U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, puts information and concepts of ancient metricists in doubt, G. arranges Aeschylus’ text in subphrases that lead to a composition of paired patterns (dactyls and anapaests) with the insertion, mainly, of iambs. Instead of seeking a homogeneity that would regularise rhythmic variations, the re-proposition of the text’s colometry ratifies the flow of exchanges between metres, through additions, subtractions and syllable exchanges (*Epiploke*) (T. Cole, *Epiploke. Rhythmical Continuity and Poetic Structure in Greek Lyric* [1988]).

In the case of the *parodos*, the metric composition revealed in the colometry unfolds in material from traditional songs accompanied by the *kithara*, the citharodic *nomos* (T.R.P. Coward, “‘Stesichorean’ Footsteps in the Parodos of Aeschylus’ Agamemnon”, in: R. Andújar, T.R.P. Coward, T.A. Hadjimichael [edd.], *Paths of Song. The Lyric Dimension of Greek Tragedy* [2018], pp. 39–64). A more complete picture of the chorus’ performance begins to form: the opening strophic triad (AAB) manifests itself in the chants and dances that bring the Trojan wars to the theatre.

In this way, the ‘colometric splitting’ works like a close-up in the montage of the flow of audiofocal patterns of the performances. To reconstruct colometry is to engage in a dialogue with a giant culture of multisensory events that reach us in incomplete form. Songs and dances of this culture will not be accessed in their original performances, but can be understood in the contexts of their production and within the scope of their singular occurrences. The approximation between textuality, performance, rhythm and sonority made explicit by colometry is a means of connecting us to the *Mousiké* (L. Lomiento, ‘Ancient Greek Metrics and Music: is it Time for a New Dialogue?’, *Greek and Roman Musical Studies* 10 [2022], 1–26). In short, the publication of this volume reinforces the perspectives opened by taking into account colometry data in the editing and interpretation of classic texts. I hope that the *I Canti del Teatro Greco* series continues to provide new editions.

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## DIONYSUS IN DRAMA

XANTHAKI-KARAMANOY (G.) *‘Dionysiac’ Dialogues. Euripides’ Bacchae, Aeschylus and Christus Patiens. (Trends in Classics Supplementary Volume 128.)* Pp. xxiv + 264, b/w & colour ill. Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2022. Cased, £103, €113.95, US\$130.99. ISBN: 978-3-11-076434-5.

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This book contributes to scholarship on Greek literature in regard to the effect of the figure of Dionysus in Greek tragedy and beyond and has two main aims: to discuss the reception

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